

NEWS

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For further information

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ALL-HAZARDS PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM MAKES EASY WORK OF KEEPING A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

For those who have failed to keep their New Year's resolutions through the first week of the year, Delaware Emergency Management Agency (DEMA) and the State Office of Volunteerism offer a no-hassle, rewarding and free solution for an easy to keep resolution. Individuals and groups can schedule a Community Outreach – Operation Preparedness (CO – OP) presentation and resolve to be better prepared for the first big snow of the season, a surprise summer power outage or the last tropical storm of 2004.

Scheduling a CO – OP presentation will help families and businesses face disruptive events, whether acts of nature or accidents of technology. The presentations are free and available to civic organizations, community centers, libraries, schools, churches and youth groups in all three counties.

A corps of DEMA-trained volunteer presenters has all-hazard preparedness information and recommendations to share with the public. The CO – OP presentation prepares members of households to sustain themselves for at least three days in the face of different types of events. A presentation includes trained volunteers, informational materials and a look at sample emergency supply kits. The program brings a message of readiness for all manner and sizes of emergencies, including storms, acts of terrorism and nuclear and chemical accidents.

The outreach program is a cooperative project of DEMA, the Senior Corps, emergency management offices of Wilmington and New Castle, Kent and Sussex counties and Best Ace Hardware Milford. The Senior Corps includes the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), Foster Grandparents and Senior Companions. First State Community Action Agency also participated in the project.

Rosanne Pack, DEMA spokesperson, said, "Our trained Senior Corps volunteers are ready to meet with all kinds of groups. They are very knowledgeable, dedicated to serving our state, and enthusiastic about their subject – basic disaster preparedness for all hazards."

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According to Pack, since the program was launched in July 2002, CO – OP volunteers have made presentations to more than 4,000 Delawareans in large corporate groups, church organizations, scouts and other youth groups, at senior centers and safety fairs.

MaryAnn Hook, Sussex County RSVP program manager, said the family emergency preparedness program gives volunteers an opportunity to be part of the homeland defense team while serving the public.

She said. “Our volunteers like providing a service that has such a positive impact. The collaboration with DEMA is exactly what is needed for a successful blend of community agencies working along with volunteer management. It is a win-win situation for all.

“We want everyone to call for an emergency preparedness presentation before the next snow storm!”

Community Outreach – Operation Preparedness presentations are free of charge. For information, or to request a presentation, call the following:

New Castle County, Scott Martin, 255-9878

Kent County, Carol Leterri, 734-1200, ext. 129

Sussex County, MaryAnn Hook, 856-5815

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